

# Newsline

*Published Quarterly by the  
Montana Department of Transportation Planning Division*

*June 2002*

## 2002 TranPlan 21 Update Stage II Public Involvement Set to Begin

***Coming soon to a location near you.... Stage II of the public and stakeholder involvement process for the 2002 update of TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide multimodal transportation plan.***

Many Montana residents and transportation stakeholders participated in Stage I of the 2002 TranPlan 21 Update public involvement process that ended in December. In addition to ten regional public and stakeholder group meeting around Montana, the process included a mail survey of over 6,000 Montanans, meetings with tribal governments, a toll-free comment line, an internet webpage, and telephone interviews of over 900 Montana residents. This input helped MDT and its consultant team of Dye Management Group, Cambridge Systematics, and Economic Development Research Group identify areas for further analysis through the remaining update process.

As a result of legislation from Montana's last legislative session, the primary focus of the 2002 TranPlan 21 Update is to develop ways to improve MDT's efforts to support economic development.

Because of this focus, the update process has included involvement of two advisory committees of experts in economic development and Montana's transportation needs. Other emphasis areas include development of a new Safety Policy Paper and a technical update to provide clearer guidance for MDT's Performance Programming Process (P<sup>3</sup>). The update is also addressing issues identified by the public during the Stage I public involvement process through focused revisions to appropriate existing policy goals and actions. Now that the consultant team has completed a comprehensive analysis of all of these areas, it is time to ask MDT's customers for input before important decisions are made about policy goals and actions that will move into the draft plan update document.

Like the Stage I public involvement process, the Stage II process will include meetings across Montana. However, in an effort to reach even more Montana residents and stakeholders, MDT will also use Montana Educational Telecommunications Network (METNET) video conference to electronically include five other locations.

During the meetings, participants will get an update on the progress of the plan update and have an opportunity to provide input about proposed policy goals and actions. See the schedule for these meetings on Page 2.

During the initial development of TranPlan 21 in 1994 and 1995, thousands of Montanans participated in the process through public open houses, focus groups, surveys, toll-free comment lines, and letters. This input resulted in a transportation policy plan that reflects the goals and interests of Montana residents. With your help and the assistance of modern technology, our hope is that even more Montanans participate in the process to update this important transportation policy document.

For more information on the 2002 TranPlan 21 Update call Dick Turner at 444-7289 or Kristine Christensen at 444-9240, call our toll-free comment and information line at 800-714-7296, check MDT's website at [www.mdt.state.mt.us](http://www.mdt.state.mt.us), or email [TranPlan21@state.mt.us](mailto:TranPlan21@state.mt.us).

## Montana Highway Reconfiguration Study Begins

Previous editions of Newsline reported on preparations for a study of the economic impacts of expanding Montana's major two-lane highways. Governor Martz requested the Montana Highway Reconfiguration Study following several discussions with local officials and residents across Montana about the importance of expanded highways in supporting and improving the State and local economies.

Working with a Reconfiguration Study Steering Committee of representatives from local government, businesses and organizations involved in highway issues, MDT recently completed the consultant selection process with the hiring of a nationally recognized team of consultants. Cambridge Systematics, Economic Development Research Group, and ICF Consulting all have extensive experience in analyzing the role transportation improvements play in local, regional, and state economies. In addition, Cambridge Systematics and Economic Development Group already have a basic understanding of Montana's economy through their involvement in the update of TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide multimodal transportation plan.

With the signing of the consultant contract, the consultant team has already started work on the initial phases of the study with the next meeting of the Reconfiguration Study Steering Committee scheduled for late August. Among the first tasks are the analysis of various modeling approaches and the development of industry-based input on the constraints and needs of Montana's businesses. The computer models will ensure the study produces technically accurate results and will provide MDT with valuable tools for future analysis of the economic benefits of proposed highway improvements.

For more information on the Montana Highway Reconfiguration Study contact Sue Sillick at 444-7693 or [ssillick@state.mt.us](mailto:ssillick@state.mt.us) or Dick Turner at 444-7289 or [dtturner@state.mt.us](mailto:dtturner@state.mt.us).

## New Portable Variable Message Signs Hit the Road

MDT recently deployed eight new portable variable message signs that will improve safety on Montana's highways. The variable message signs will let motorists know of possible delays or adverse conditions such as maintenance work, traffic accidents or icy roads.

Each 4,000 lb. sign is powered by sixteen 6-volt golf cart batteries. The batteries are charged by two solar panels that sit horizontally on top of the sign. A fully charged sign can run an average of 30 days – a distinct advantage during cloudy weather.

The signs each have their own cell phone antenna and a local telephone number so that maintenance workers can enter or change messages from remote locations using computer terminals and a telephone connection. There is also a control panel attached to the sign trailer which allows MDT maintenance crews to change messages on the spot.

MDT purchased the signs as part of the Greater Yellowstone Rural Intelligent Transportation Systems Project. Montana State University's Western Transportation Institute will evaluate the benefits of the signs and submit a final report to MDT, the Federal Highway Administration, and other organizations participating in the project.

For more information contact Ross Tervo at 444-9248 or email [rtervo@state.mt.us](mailto:rtervo@state.mt.us).



### Open House Schedule Time: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

- Glasgow** - Tuesday, June 18th, Elk's Lodge, 309 S. 2nd Avenue
- Billings** - Wednesday, June 19th, Parmly Library, 510 N Broadway, 3rd Floor
- Kalispell** - Tuesday, June 25th, City Hall Council Chambers, 312 S 1st Avenue
- Great Falls** - Wednesday, June 26th, Great Falls Civic Center, Gibson Room
- Belgrade** - Thursday, June 27th, City Hall Council Chambers, 91 E Central

The **METNET** session will be held on Thursday, June 20, 2002 from 2 pm to 4 pm. In addition to the originating location in Room 209 at the Helena College of Technology of the University of Montana, the public can participate in the METNET session at the following locations:

- Missoula - University of Montana, Gallagher Building (corner of Arthur & Eddy), Room 104
- Butte - Montana Tech of the University of Montana, Engineering Lab Classroom Building, Room 231, 1300 West Park Street
- Havre - Montana State University-Northern, Hagener Science Center, Room 202, 300 11th Street West
- Miles City - Miles City Community College Room 106, 2715 Dickinson



A portable variable message sign warns motorists about sand removal operations on McDonald Pass in early May.



# TRANSIT TALES



## Montana Bus Roadeo Scheduled for Great Falls

The Eleventh Annual Montana Statewide Bus Roadeo will take place Saturday, June 22 in Great Falls. Transit drivers from around Montana will compete at the Great Falls Fairgrounds' parking lot on obstacle courses designed to duplicate everyday driving. The one-day competition promotes safety by encouraging and rewarding professional driving skills, according to Montana Transit Association (MTA) Coordinator, Noel Larrivee.

"The Bus Roadeo provides participants with positive job-related motivation by emphasizing the important role they play in providing safe and reliable transportation for the citizens of Montana," Larrivee said. "It also builds camaraderie among the drivers and various transportation providers by the sportsmanship and pride the event fosters, and it's just plain fun."

A new component this year will be three one-hour driver-training courses offered Saturday morning. Course curriculum will include "Defensive Driving in Construction Zones", "Winter Driving Conditions" and "Wheelchair Lift Troubleshooting."

Conducted in two divisions, the Montana Statewide Bus Roadeo gives operators of large buses

(fixed route) and small buses (paratransit) the opportunity to test their skills. Drivers from Great Falls Transit, Missoula's Mountain Line, and Billings' MET Transit will compete on a course set up in accordance with the American Public Transit Association (APTA) guidelines for the full-size division. The paratransit division course conforms to the guidelines established by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA).

The winner of each division receives an all-expense paid trip to the national competition, representing all of Montana's passenger transportation providers. The APTA full-size bus competition will be held in Las Vegas in September, 2002, and the CTAA small-bus competition will be held in Philadelphia in May, 2003.

A practice will be held for participants Saturday morning at the site. Drivers are each allowed 20 minutes to familiarize themselves with the course in the bus they will be driving. The public is welcome to watch the bus roadeo beginning at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. For safety reasons, only participants, officials and judges are allowed on the course.

For questions about the Statewide Bus Roadeo or to register, call Noel Larrivee, MTA Coordinator at 523-4944.

## Quarterly Report Now Online



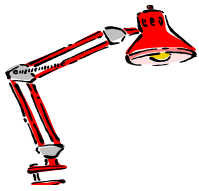
MDT has developed an easy online approach for submitting transit quarterly reports. Just go to the webpage, enter your data and with a click of the button you are done. Reports are instantly filed! You'll never be late again. All MDT grantees should start using this process immediately. You can access the form at the following address:

[http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/departments/transportation\\_planning/transit\\_programs](http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/departments/transportation_planning/transit_programs). You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader downloaded on your computer to complete the report process.

This is a free download through MDT's Transit Section webpage.

If you have any questions or have problems when submitting, contact David Jacobs at 444-6120 or [djacobs@state.mt.us](mailto:djacobs@state.mt.us).





# CTEP Project Spotlight

(Community Transportation Enhancement Program)

## Stephens Avenue Landscaping Missoula

*Before*



*After*

"What about something like Stephens Avenue?" Phil Smith of Missoula's Bicycle Pedestrian Office hears this comment over and over from Missoula citizens at transportation planning meetings. It seems everyone in Missoula wants their street to look as good as the new Stephens Avenue.

Stephens Avenue is a walking neighborhood. The aesthetics, traffic management and bicycle/pedestrian facilities were all enhanced when CTEP funds were combined with Urban Highway Program funds to make improvements. CTEP funds provided landscaping and historic lighting in 15 foot wide medians; curb ramps, sidewalks and bulb-outs; about 100 trees; an irrigation system; and striping for bicycle lanes. Urban highway funds were used primarily for overlaying the existing street and providing turn lanes. The project limits were from South Sixth Street to Mount Avenue.

Prior to this project, Stephens was an exceptionally wide four lane roadway with no protected left turn lanes. This project improved safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. The distance from curb to curb for a person crossing Stephens used to be about 90 feet. Now with bulb-outs and medians, the crossing distance to a point of relative safety is only about 30 feet. Doug Harby of the City of Missoula reports the addition of the medians has also helped to slow traffic by about 10 miles per hour.



Missoula refers to itself as "Montana's Bicycle Town." The city is replete with bike lanes, bike routes, and bike/pedestrian trails. The bike lanes on Stephens further enhanced this system by connecting bike routes on Beckwith Street and Mount Avenue. There are now close to 20 miles of interconnected bike lanes and routes and another 10 miles of bike/pedestrian trails within Missoula.

Stephens Avenue looks so nice the Missoula Historical Preservation Commission recently presented an award to the city for excellence in the category of Public Works, New Construction, Compatible with a Historic Neighborhood. A big thanks to JTL of Missoula (general contractor), PCI (consulting engineer) and to Doug Harby and the City of Missoula staff for making this project a reality.

## Judith Basin County Courthouse Stanford

Along the Charlie Russell Trail in Judith Basin County sits the community of Stanford. There you will find the County Courthouse where a CTEP historic preservation project was recently completed. The project included the replacement of approximately fifty deteriorating windows.

The Courthouse is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. As such, all of the preservation work had to conform to the Secretary of the Interior's standards regarding historic structures. Coordination with Herb Dawson of the State Historic Preservation Office and Jon Axline, MDT Historian, helped ensure the historic nature of the courthouse was maintained.

Prairie Wind Architecture of Lewistown prepared the plans and specifications. Structural Building Systems, also of Lewistown, was the contractor for the project. Special thanks to Kim Holzer, a volunteer for Judith Basin County for coordinating this project and making sure it was a success.

This was the fourth CTEP project in Stanford. In 2000, an underground sprinkler system was installed at the courthouse and at a nearby park. In 1995 and again in 1997, sidewalk projects were constructed in various locations in Stanford.

In case you're wondering, and we know you are, Leland and Jane Stanford, founders of Stanford University were not connected with Stanford, Montana. Rather, Stanford gets its name from two fellows who came west to raise sheep. They were from Stanfordville, which is about 100 miles north of New York City.



**For more information on CTEP call Thomas  
Martin at (406) 444-0809 or e-mail  
tmartin@state.mt.us.**

# Partnering in Support of Multiple Missions

MDT, Montana's local and Tribal governments, other Montana State Agencies and Federal Land Management agencies are all faced with the same problem: insufficient resources to fulfill their missions.

Over the years, MDT has found that partnering can close the gap between needs and resources. The most successful partnerships come from each party contributing resources that support its mission, based on the benefit it receives from the project. Often, partners will contribute resources other than money to a project - such as engineering and design resources, or right-of-way. In other cases, partners have taken

on long-term maintenance commitments to ensure a project's success.

On May 15, Patricia Saindon, MDT's Rail Transit and Planning Administrator, shared information on partnered projects at the US Forest Service's Conference on Innovative Transportation Funding in Missoula. The following examples are from her presentation and represent only a very few of the many MDT partnered projects of recent years. Because of the interest in putting together funding partnerships to support multiple missions, we will share information on partnered projects in future issues of the *Newsline* as space permits.

## COUNTY/MDT/USFS YANKEE JIM CAMPGROUND TRAIL



Park County prioritized CTEP funds for:

- \* Gravel parking area
- \* Trail clearing
- \* Benches
- \* Informational signs

USFS provided engineering

## BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY – VISTA POINT REST AREA



Project replaced a derelict rest area with a modern facility

Funding

- \* Scenic Byways Grant
- \* Public Lands Highway Discretionary Grant

These funding sources present opportunities for partnering

- \* Tied to highway program
- \* Both supported by State and USFS

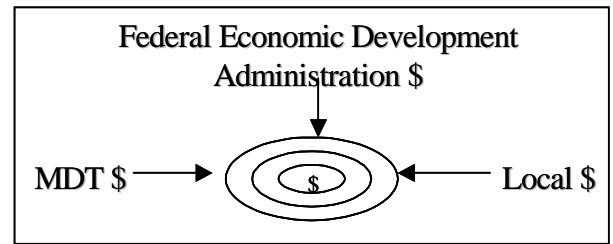
Congressional delegation assisted throughout

## NORTH RESERVE - MISSOULA



Missoula city and county officials planned the North Reserve expansion to accommodate new commercial growth.

Where did the money come from?



Missoula officials did not want to wait 10 years until MDT could expand N. Reserve

1995 partnering agreement to accelerate project – MDT/City/County

Review, design and construction took 4 years total

Project completed on schedule  
Significant effort by City, County, State, and Senator Baucus' Office

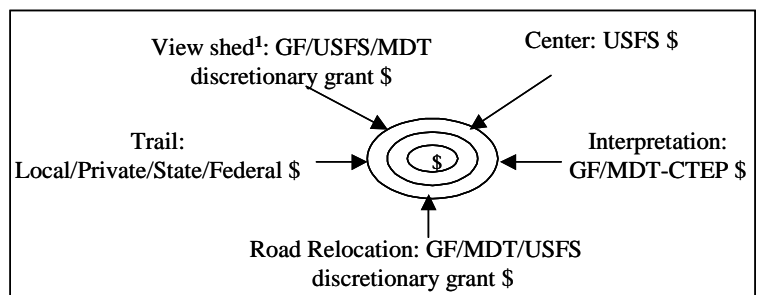
## LEWIS & CLARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER GIANT SPRINGS ROAD and RIVER'S EDGE TRAIL-GREAT FALLS



Complex Project with many phases:

- \* Interpretive Center
- \* River's Edge Trail
- \* Road relocation
- \* Interpretation
- \* View Shed Protection

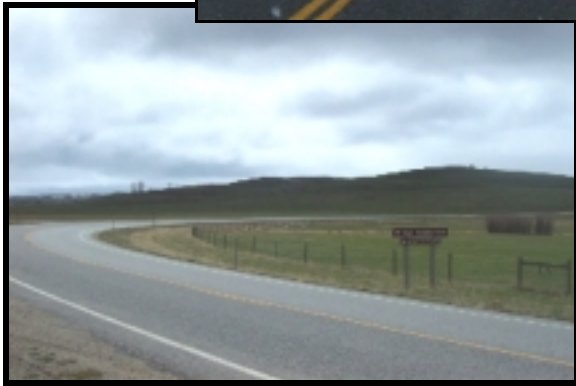
Nearing completion  
Congressional Delegation has assisted throughout.



1. Still being resolved by appropriations committee



## STILLWATER RIVER ROAD SECONDARY 419



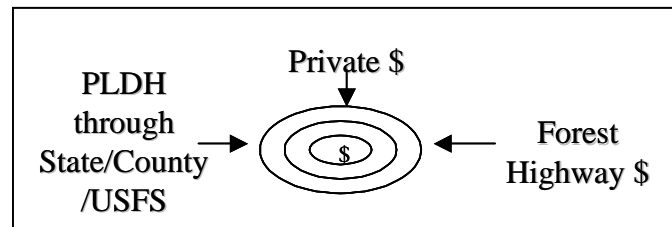
Project serves the only Platinum/Palladium Mine in the US

- \* Mine Contribution
- \* Public Highways Discretionary Grant
- \* Forest Highways money

On track for completion in 2003

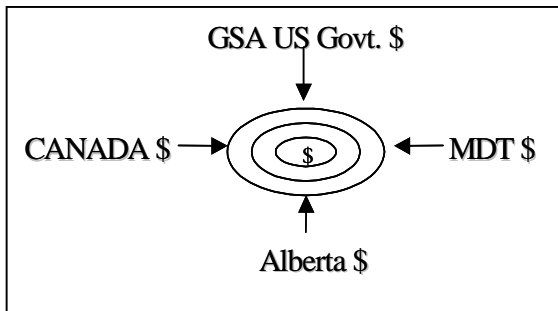
Significant effort by USFS, County, State, and Senator Burns' Office.

LESSON: If there's a plan and commitment, eventually the funding will be found.



## SWEET GRASS-COUTTS BORDER CROSSING

Where did the money come from?



Border crossing improvement had been planned for 15 years – but never resolved

2001 partnering agreement made progress possible

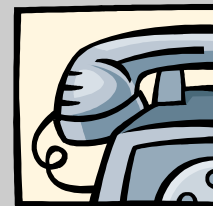
Project is now under construction



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## ***Transportation Planning Division Telephone Numbers***



Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call 1-800-714-7296 (in Montana only), or (406) 444-3423. TTY (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592.

Administrator (Patricia Saindon).....	444-0410
Bike/Pedestrian (Carol Strizich).....	444-9273
CTEP (Thomas Martin).....	444-0809
Map Orders (James Colegrove).....	444-6119
Multimodal Planning (Dick Turner) .....	444-7289
Projects (Jeff Ebert).....	444-7639
Secondary Roads (Gary Larson).....	444-6110
Road Data & Mapping (Ed Ereth).....	444-6111
Traffic Data (Dan Bisom).....	444-6122
Transit (Janis Winston) .....	444-4210
Urban Planning (Zia Kazimi) .....	444-3445
ITS Planning (Ross Tervo) .....	444-9248
Newsline Editor (Joan Scott) .....	444-7307

6550 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of 39¢ per copy for a total of \$2,539.72 which includes \$733.72 for printing and \$1,806.00 for distribution. Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request. TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592.

## ***MDT's Mission***

*To serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize  
quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality  
and sensitivity to the environment.*



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# !! Attention, Attention !!

## New "Bikes on Roadway" Signs Available

If you are planning a bicycling or running event in your community or area you are probably considering the safety of participants. MDT has an excellent resource available to help ensure the safety of your event. MDT's "Bikes on Roadway" signs are 36 in x 36 in, diamond shape, orange mesh with four inch black lettering. The signs are portable and lightweight and can be checked out by any individual or group organizing an event.



By late June MDT will have a total of 35 "Bikes on Roadway" signs at MDT offices across the state including: Helena, Missoula, Kalispell, Bozeman, Billings, Butte and Great Falls. The signs can be reserved and checked out from the following MDT individuals in your area:

***Carol Strizich, Helena – (406) 444-9273***

***Victor Schatz, Missoula – (406) 523-5836***

***Rich Sipe/Linda Miller, Kalispell – (406) 755-5717***

***Paul Bronson, Billings – (406) 657-0217***

***Kevin Brewer, Butte – (406) 494-9627***

***Dave Kelly, Great Falls – (406) 454-5889***

***Maurice DeDycker, Bozeman – (406) 586-9562***

We encourage you to use these signs and tell us about your event. When you pick up the signs, we ask that you tell us what organization or event you are representing, the date(s) of the event, how many riders you expect, your planned route, whether this is an annual event, and a point of contact we can call for follow-up information.



### Look and Listen for Safety News!

MDT is sponsoring a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign on bicycle and pedestrian safety issues this summer. Keep your ears and eyes open for this helpful information.

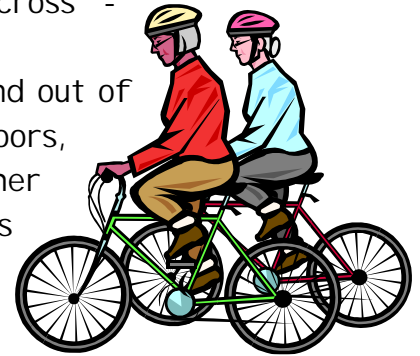


## Share the Road

Summer is here, and with the nice weather comes an increase in outdoor activities like walking and bicycling. This summer should be filled with fun for everyone, so let's keep it safe as well by sharing the road with other users.

Motorists, please stay alert for pedestrians - especially children. Remember all intersections are crosswalks whether they are marked or not and pedestrians have the right of way. Pedestrians, remember that motorists can't always see you even if you can see them. When crossing the street look left, then right, then left again and continue to look in both directions as you cross - stay alert and stay safe.

Cycling continues to grow in popularity with Montanans and out of state visitors. Cycling is a great way to stay fit, enjoy the outdoors, and to see Montana from a different point of view. Warm weather brings an increased number of touring cyclists to our highways as well as recreational cyclists to our towns and local trail systems. Cyclists ride individually and in groups of all sizes and for many different reasons. Some ride just for the pleasure of it, for exercise, to raise money for great causes, and others for transportation.



Motorists, please be aware and stay alert for cyclists on our roads and highways. When approaching a cyclist on the road, slow down and wait until it is safe to pass. When passing a cyclist, like with any other vehicle, pass with care and leave a minimum of 3 feet between your vehicle and the cyclist. All public roads in Montana are open to cyclists, and cyclists have all the rights and responsibilities as motor vehicle drivers, with few exceptions. Let's work together to keep our roadways safe this summer by being courteous and sharing the road. Please help make our highways and streets safer for everyone by posting this flyer at work or by passing it on to your friends and co-workers.

For more information call Carol Strizich at (406) 444-9273, email [cstrizich@state.mt.us](mailto:cstrizich@state.mt.us), or visit the MDT webpage at [www.mdt.state.mt.us](http://www.mdt.state.mt.us).

